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The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

Vol. XLII MARCH, 1934 No. 9

"THE TRAINED SPIRIT"

If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Gall. 5:25.

Jesus told Nicodemus that in order for him to understand the deeper meanings of the new Gospel he "must be born again"; that in order to enter God's Kingdom of truth and righteousness and love he must "be born of water and of the spirit."

What Jesus meant by being born of the spirit is disclosed to us in the conversation he had with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, during which he spoke to her of a well of living water and of worshipping God in spirit and in truth. It is what he meant when he said to his disciples that the Kingdom of God was within them. In all of his teachings Jesus placed the supreme emphasis upon the priceless value of man's inner life and set himself the sublime task of ministering to the deepest needs of the human heart.

The same was true of the teachings of St. Paul. He always distinguished between the letter of the law and the spirit of life and truth, saying that the letter killeth but that the spirit giveth life. He told his followers to take unto themselves the sword of the spirit and he spoke to them of the fruits of the spirit; again, he said, "If we live in the spirit let us also walk in the spirit."

Again and again we ought to remind ourselves of this priceless value of man's inner life and listen to the still small voice of the spirit. It was Dr. William Ellery Channing who said near the close of a wonderful and beautiful and useful life that he had received many messages from the spirit. In the Book of Job we read that,—"There is a spirit in man and the inspirations of the Almighty giveth him understanding."

A noted French scholar was once asked if he had a soul and his reply was, "No! I have a body; I am a soul." And an eminent English Divine, in speaking of this priceless value of man's inner life said that, "The life of the spirit is the evidence of immortality."

Our relation to the Universe is both physical and spiritual. If the chief concern of science is with the mystery wrapped up in the tiny form of an atom, the chief concern of religion is with the secret centered in man's inner life and being; one deals with physical life and power and the other deals with spiritual life and power; one deals with man's body and the other deals with man's spirit, with man's personality. It was Matthew Arnold who said, "Know then, man has all that Nature hath and more, and in that more lie all his hopes of good." It is the religious experience in our hearts that reveals to us this priceless value of our inner lives and makes us conscious of our kinship with the Unseen and Eternal.

Somewhat in the same way as it is the province of the school to train the minds of its students it is the chief concern of religion and the church to train and discipline the inner life of man. A professor in the University of Chicago, in speaking of the transcendent worth of the religious experience, or the religious impulse in human lives as he calls it and its bearing upon human life and conduct, has given us a remarkable description, and one not easy to be forgotten, of what he calls "The Trained Spirit."

These are his words and they add a deep significance to what we have been saying about the priceless value of man's

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inner life, and they may well be allowed to become the working philosophy of our daily lives: "The religious impulse (he says) does not express itself fully in a trained body or in a trained mind, but in the subordination of a trained body and a trained mind to the trained Spirit."

Some things may be accomplished by the work of our hands; other things by the exercise of our minds; but there are many things that yield, if at all, to the exercise of our spiritual powers. There are burdens to be endured, hardships to be overcome and sorrows that can be assuaged only by the practice of "the presence of God," by prayer and by a steadfast reliance upon a stronger will and a deeper life and love than our own.

The same as physical and mental power can be increased by use, discipline and training, so can spiritual power be increased by use, discipline and training.

The service of worship is a great training school of the spirit that helps us to find the God within us that we find everywhere without us. Through prayer, praise, thanksgiving, adoration, deep humility and obedience to God's will the highest and best in our own lives rise in quiet majesty to meet and commune and find fellowship with the highest and best in this beautiful and marvelous and divine world of seen and unseen realities, in which our lives have been placed and where we live and move and have our being and await the "one clear call."

If our worship is in spirit and in truth and we become not weary in well-doing, we may be sure that what happened in the life of Jesus and what he wanted to have happen in the life of Nicodemus and what he wanted to have happen in the life of our common Humanity will happen in our lives and they will be made free, calm, brave, strong and glad to endure and to overcome.

"Forenoon and afternoon and night!
Forenoon
And afternoon and night! Forenoon,
and what!
The empty song repeats itself! No more?
Yea! that is life: Make this forenoon
sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a
prayer,
And Time is conquered, and thy crown
is won."

—*Rev. Frederic W. Smith.*

OUR OWN

If I had known in the morning
How wearily all the day
The words unkind
Would trouble my mind
I said when you went away
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain,
But we vex "our own"
With look and tone
We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet well it might be
That never for me
The pain of the heart should cease.
How many go forth in the morning
Who never come home at night;
And hearts have broken
For harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometimes guest,
But oft for "our own"
The bitter tone
Though we love our own the best.
Ah! lip with the curve impatient;
Ah! brow with that look of scorn,
'T were a cruel fate
Were the night too late
To undo the work of the morn.

—*Margaret E. Sangster.*

A GARDEN NOT MADE WITH HANDS

When the ice cap pushed southward in New Hampshire, rolling over and over the chunks of granite it bit from the White Mountains, it was evidently dammed for a time by the Monadnock ridge, and before it could rise high enough to crest those hills and push on, it deposited huge, rounded boulders all over the landscape. Two miles north of Peterborough, beside the upper road to Hancock, is a field—perhaps they call it a pasture—which is nothing but a mass of low rocks, ground yew, steeple bush, and blueberries. It looks agriculturally hopeless, and horticulturally unpromising. Yet it contains a garden gem.

Leave the road, climb eastward a little way through this field, and presently you find that it rises to a sharp crest against the sky, and directly on top of this crest, outlined completely against the blue, are two enormous granite boulders, with only a narrow cleft between them, each twenty feet long, or more, and probably fifteen feet high. Against one of them are growing two spired spruces, as tall again as the rock, dense in foliage and perfect in shape. The other stands clear, its rounded massiveness etched on the sky. Draw a little closer, now, and you will see that at the feet of each boulder, rising up against its base like a green wave, is a delicate border of Dicksonia, or hay scented fern. The effect is curiously that of a green wave just lifting to crash at the base of a rocky headland.

The gray boulders, enormously massive, yet softened in contour by their rounded curves, the dark, spired spruces shadowing one of them, the dainty charge of the fronded wave at their feet, all set apart and thrown into high relief against a summer sky, make an effect no landscape architect could ever hope to equal.

When you are beside these boulders, you see the land drop sharply to the east, and look across the little river valley to Ragged Mountain and Pack Monadnock. Or, facing back toward the southwest, you see far off the blue pyramid of old Monadnock himself. Down the slope at your feet is an ancient house under guardian maples, and off somewhere among the rocks and blueberry bushes a cowbell tinkles, as its wearer searches for scanty nourishment. The languid summer wind stirs an odor from the spruces, and the ferns are sweet. Nothing more is needed. Flowers in this garden would be impertinent. — *From "New England Vista," by Walter Prichard Eaton.*

MY NIGHT THOUGHT

THEN AND NOW

Kneeling beside my mother's knee
When young this prayer was taught to me
"As now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

But when my mother was not near
Into my heart there crept a fear.
In church I heard "final judgment"
And "everlasting punishment."
The choir would sing with solemn tone
"Before Jehovah's awful throne,"
And sometimes all would join and sing
The hymn "Come Thou Almighty King."
From all I heard the people say
I thought God must be far away.
I thought God dwelt above all height,
Judging my actions day and night,
But now I know that God is near—
Is nearer than the atmosphere.
Rhyming my night thought of today
This is the prayer that I would say:
Father! I lay me down to sleep
Assured that Thou my soul will keep.
If it be here or be elsewhere
There is no place but Thou art there.
Thy love so constant and so deep
Ever protects me while I sleep.
Knowing that Thou art always near,
Within my heart there lurks no fear.
Thy will expressed must always be
For good of all, so best for me;
I trust in Thee my soul to keep
And lay me down—in peace—to sleep.

—CHARLES DUTTON.

Completed July, 1926, when more than 88 years of age. Contributed by Mrs. F. C. Brush, Montclair, N. J.

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

MRS. JOHN A. MCCADDIN, *Chairman*, 21 Ashfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

A correspondent writing to the Exchange for the first time should always give as reference the name and address of her minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

APPEALS

1. Mrs. Jessie Belle Pearson, R. 2, Sylvester, Ga., writes asking if someone would send some True Story magazines to her for her brother after they have been read. She, herself, would appreciate some old copies of the McCall's and Holland magazines, also some pieces for her "Step around the Mountain" quilt.

2. Mrs. K. E. Williams, Spencer, Va., would like some pieces and embroidery thread, also some picture books or games for her little boy 6 years old. Her husband would like some magazines and papers.

3. It is very lonely here and I would like to get some papers and books to read to the children, and some quilt scraps for myself. Mrs. James Huneycutt, Mt. Gilead, N. C.

4. I want to thank you all for the cheer that has been sent us in the past. We are so tickled to get a package and look forward to our mail. It is the joy of our lives. We would be glad to get quilt scraps as it takes so many here in the mountains. Thread of any kind would be appreciated. Would someone send me some salt or flour bags for dishcloths? My boy that goes to school would appreciate pencils or paper. It takes so many. Mrs. Maudie Sizemore, Sturgills, N. C.

5. Mrs. Jestine Barker, Grassy Creek, N. C., would love to hear from some of her old friends and some new ones, too. She would like to receive patchwork pieces, sewing, sewing machine thread, and especially some embroidery thread for the girls.

6. I would be glad to get some reading matter, embroidery thread or bits to embroider. Anything to help me pass away the lonely hours. I am a young married woman and have a sweet baby boy, 3 months old. Mrs. Claudia Harris, R. 1, Box 74, Kingsland, Ark.

7. Mrs. Beulah Polk, Norwood, N. C., has not heard from the Exchange for some time and would appreciate some quilt pieces and reading.

8. I would love to thank the one that sends me the *Cheerful Letter* that I like to read so well. My health is poor and I am not strong enough to do much work. A long hard winter is here again, and may I please have some bits of embroidery thread, and a few quilt scraps? A little bit of cheer helps so much. My two boys, 2 and 4, would like some pictures and cards. Mrs. Mae Wyatt, Thaxton, N. C.

9. It has been quite a while since I have written to the Exchange and, as I

have some quilts started and need more pieces and thread, I thought someone may have some on hand that they would send me to finish my quilts. I need some solid colors and print, and white or cream pieces for my Dutch doll quilt. Just any kind will be highly appreciated. Mrs. M. B. Gregory, Tennessee Colony, R. 1, Texas.

10. Mrs. J. B. Sheperd, Thaxton, N. C., has a boy 3 years old and two girls, 10 and 8, who would like pencils and paper for their schoolwork. Also quilt material or something for quilt linings, or any kind of thread would be appreciated.

11. I wish to thank all who have remembered me in the past with letters and reading. Would like very much any good books or magazines that could be sent to me, and will pass on to others. Would especially like any of Grace S. Richmond's or Zane Grey's books. I still suffer with asthma but do not have attacks as often as a few years ago. Would like a Birthday card shower on my birthday which is March 27. Miss Viola Haidegree, Box 338, Winder, Ga.

12. Mrs. Fannie E. Belcher, Box 2, Stuart, Va., wishes someone would send books or cards for her little 9-year-old girl as she is not able to buy any. She has a boy in the 10th grade in school who would like good books to read. She would also like some bits of yarn or quilt material as she is lonely and lives far from any town.

13. All my children but two are married, and all but two live near me. Five of my six children are grown-up. We all love reading, and would like to get back numbers of Western Story magazines and books of adventure for the boys. I would like back numbers of McCall's, and some story books for the little children. Some go to school now, and I need quilt scraps and thread for this winter. Mrs. Beulah Davis, R. 2, Tolar, Texas.

14. I am the mother of seven children from 8 months to 18 years of age. I would be glad if the *Cheerful Letter* friends would send me reading of any kind. Mill-ends of thread or sewing material would be most appreciated. I would like thread to embroider with and a few scraps for patchwork. Mrs. Retha E. Howell, Bina, N. C.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Mattie Bennett from Dodson to Buffalo Ridge, Va.

Mrs. Dewey Duncan from Stella to Route 1, Stuart, Va.

Mrs. Joanna Crook from P. O. Box 242 to 217 N. Brown St., Albemarle, N. C.

Mrs. John Martin from Dodson to Buffalo Ridge, Va.

Mrs. Claudia Harris from Parkdale to R. 1, Box 74, Kingsland, Ark.

Mrs. M. B. Gregory from Palestine to R. 1, TennesseeColony, Texas.

Mrs. J. B. Cobler from Spencer to Bassetts, Va.

Mrs. James Huneycutt from R. 3, Albemarle, to R. 2, Mt. Gilead, N. C.

Mrs. K. E. Williams from Big Sandy, W. Va., to Spencer, Va.

Mrs. Retha E. Howell from Jefferson to Bina, N. C.

OFFER

For the following books write to Mrs. F. C. Brush, 29 High Street, Montclair, N. J.

The Life of Christ—Stalker
An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion (1925)—Thouless.
Robbing Youth of Religion—Holliday
Twelve Tests of Character—Fosdick
The Meaning of Faith—Fosdick
The Meaning of Prayer—Fosdick
The Manhood of the Master—Fosdick
Love, Home and the Inner Life—Gleason
The Social Principles of Jesus—Rauschenbusch
Christianizing Community Life—Ward-Edwards
The Overcoming Life—Moore
Marcus Aurelius (Selections)
As a Man Thinketh (paper)—Allen
Pilgrim's Progress
On Some of Life's Ideals—William James
The Case for India—Durant
What is the Matter with Canada?

All about Going Abroad (1927)—Franck
The Lakes of Northern Italy (paper)—Bagot
Old Shrines and Ivy—Winter
Homes of American Authors (1853)—Various Writers
Book of Poems, Balm of Gilead—Hellene Mullins
Cyrus and Alexander—Abbott
Silas Marner—George Eliot
Dante—Cary
Homer—Iliad—literal trans.
The Marquise (paper)—George Sand
De Coverley Papers—Addison
Burke—Morley
Voices of our Leaders (addresses during World War)
For America an Interpretation and Plan (1931-32)—Fowler
Evolution of Love (paper)—Ellen Key
What a Young Husband Ought to Know—Stall
What a Young Wife Ought to Know—Drake
How to Live—Fisher and Fisk
The Science of Power—Kidd
My Education and Religion—Gordon
The Mental Hygiene of Childhood (1929) White
Household Hygiene (1914)—Elliott
Bacterial Yeasts and Molds in the Home (1912) (1918)—Conn
Good Housekeeping Book of Recipes
Common Sense in the Household—Marion Harland
Baking Made Easy—Mrs. Frederic and Baker
Seald Sweet Cook Book (2 paper advertising books)
The Common Sense of Drinking—Peabody
The Psychology of Insanity—Hart
Industries of Today—Lane
The Selling Process—Hawkins
The Business of Writing—Holliday
Handbook of Phrenology (1869)
Complete Phonographic Instructor (1900)—Isaac Pitman

"TIMES AIN'T HARD—WHEN I WAS A BOY—"—BY AN OLD TIMER

"Don't talk to me about hard times. I was born eight miles from a school, nine miles from church, 885 miles from New York, 200 miles from a wash hole, and 15 feet from a cornfield. Nearest neighbors lived two miles away and couldn't read or write. I never saw a suit of underwear until I was 17. The only books we had were a Bible and a catalog.

"There were 12 members in our family and we had three rooms, including a dining room that also was a kitchen. Everybody at home worked and we thought everybody else in the world had gravy and bread for breakfast; liver and cracklin' hotcake for dinner; buttermilk and corn pone for supper, 'cause that's what we had.

"Some of us wore brogan shoes occasionally in the wintertime. We had nice white shirts for summertime use. We slept on straw ticks, pillows were not thought of. I never knew money would rattle until I was 'most grown. Father got hold of two half-dollars at the same time and let us hear them rattle. Taxes were no higher, but harder to pay.

"We owned two kerosene lamps, neither of which had a chimney. Our house wasn't ceiled. We had a glass window in our 'company' room. Our nicest piece of furniture was a home-made rocker. Our beds were of the slat, or tight-rope sort.

"We went to school two or three months yearly, but not in a bus; we used a two-mule wagon. We dressed up on Sundays, but not in silks or satins. We sopped our own molasses; we ate our own meat; we considered rice a delicacy for only preachers to eat.

"We had heard of cheese, but never saw any; we knew of some store-bought clothes; but never hoped to wear any; we got a stick of candy and three raisins for Christmas and were happy; we loved Pa and Ma and never were hungry; enjoyed going naked, didn't want much, expected nothing. And that's why our so-called hard-times ain't hard on me."—

A resident of Banders, Tex., in the home town paper.

INSTILLING MANNERS

To Home Circle: "Mary is so bashful! She hid when you came in," volunteered Mary's mother disgustedly. I had not missed the child, nor even thought of her, and my heart ached in sympathy for the shrinking little eight-year-old, as she sidled shame-facedly forth at her mother's command to "come out here now, and speak to the ladies, and act as if you knew something."

Humiliated and confused at having attention thus rudely directed toward her, the child responded awkwardly to our greeting, and at the first opportunity scurried from the room like a frightened partridge.

And only a few days before I had seen her take part, very creditably and happily in a school program, and I had thought "what a bright, attractive little thing she is!" It seemed that only at home was she so stiff and self-conscious.

In another home, a game the little folks from toddle-age to school age and past, enjoy most is "playing company." Mother and the children take turns in being "host or hostess," and "guests." "Mr. Goodfellow" calls on "Mrs. Smith." Perhaps "Miss Prettygirl" drops in soon afterward for a little visit. Greetings are exchanged, introductions made, news of the day, the weather, and neighborhood events are discussed. Occasionally simple refreshments are served. The guests depart after assuring their hostess that they have had a very pleasant time, etc.

Children love these "acting" games, and they may learn thereby, in a delightfully interesting way, many forms of social usage that will stand them in good stead later. And mother need not spend much precious time at it either. The child's imagination enables him to ignore tasks she may be doing that do not fit in with the game, much as it enables him to relate casually an exciting adventure he had in "driving over"; or she may excuse herself politely on the plea of being "so very busy today," just as she might do if a real neighbor dropped in, and go on with her sewing, baking, mending, or other work as she plays, putting in a word or a suggestion now and then, to keep things going nicely.

And these children do not run and hide when strangers come, for there is nothing that gives children (adults as well) poise and self-confidence in any situation, as does the satisfaction of knowing that they can acquit themselves creditably.

—*Alice Hoppes.*

WHAT COULD WE SAY?

The evening shadows deepen
The hours of day are past
What have we done since rise of sun
To prove love standeth fast?
What thought of adoration,
What gentle Christlike deeds
To prove we live ourselves to give
In thought and life in deed?
What little spot is lighter
Or better any way,
Because we live, all light to give
Within our little day?
If we should find him standing
Beside us here tonight
Would there not be something to see
By love's unwavering light?
If we should hear him ask what our love had done
Through all the day, What could we say
To Christ the loving one?

—*George Kenigle.*

We should make the hours with our children full of joy, then 20 years from now we, too, can recall how happy they were, how we heard their merry voices and watched them play, and we can look with pride on our children whom we loved and who went to "Grown-up land." Then, too, the quiet hours with our children should be loving hours.

How much the small touches of a mother's love mean to the child! Even if it is only to whisper to your son as he starts to school, "Remember, mother is thinking about you all day and expecting you to be a good boy," how much better the effect of such a farewell than to hurry him away with some sharp and nervous rebuke.—*Clipped.*

THE FASTING TIME

A very large proportion of the members of the Universal Church of Christ are just now "keeping Lent"—the annual time of fasting which has come down through many centuries, ever since a working church calendar was formulated by the Christian leaders. This forty days' observance is commemorative first, a period of fasting and thus of self-discipline and cultural advance. For fasting is always something to be undertaken with a view toward one's own growth in character, and so in power of witnessing for Christ. It is never to be considered as a gift to God, on His demand, by establishing a claim on Him which we expect to be returned in gifts of higher value.

We are not to think of God as one who likes to see us lack or suffer, or who for His own enjoyment asks us to deprive ourselves of any good and helpful thing. In fact the only obligation which we can impose on God is that of fulfilling His own promises by our use of the means which He has given us for the purposes of improvement for which He has Himself intended them. God is no bargainer who seeks to fill His treasury from our curtailment. He is not enriched or gratified by our abstaining except as it affords a means of help for us toward growth into that character with which He is well pleased—that character of godliness which makes for happiness and is becoming in His child.

Of these two purposes of Lent and fasting, the more romantic is that of our commemoration, and the more practical is our advancement toward a genuine growth in character. The commemorative purpose is to call to mind the forty days of thought and fasting of Jesus in the wilderness—which we might call his university course of study, prayer and meditation, a course which armed him against temptation and shaped the rule and purpose of his life. There is an element of romance in all commemorative thought, for it helps to associate otherwise disassociated lives. I think, whether we keep Lent or not, we should often, and by preference at some fixed times and in some settled order, seek to lay our own experience by the side of that of our leader and forerunner. For the imagination as well as the intellect and the will needs some religious training. We can live with Christ in thought. We shall keep Lent to the best advantage by some deliberate withdrawals from the too-exacting interests and occupations of our present-day affairs to put ourselves in sympathy with Him in His experience of life and His training for the work He had to do for men. Without some element of this form of commemorative thought and meditative experience we may drift along quite unprepared for the following joys of Easter.

For Lent and Easter bring together the youth and the maturity of that supreme and overcoming life in such a form as makes them vivid as a growth of genuinely human sympathy and experience to our imagination. It is an experience which makes us feel that we, too, are going on from inexperience towards fulfilment, and that even now in our own imperfection we may learn to share the patience and the confidence of Christ, who denied himself that he might fulfil himself in the completion of His work and the continuing victory that should follow.

Self-restraint and self-denial, then, which find one of their forms of expression in abstinence and fasting, are not to be considered as a good in themselves, but as a step and means towards good. We deny ourselves that we may grow in grace and rid ourselves of evil tendencies. And that higher good may be summed up as the fulfilling of our proper aim in life. Fasting, rightly used, may become a cure for idle listlessness as well as a guard against temptation. In this respect it is the consequent of true repentence. We turn, and we forsake and keep on forsaking. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." It is time we should bethink ourselves as we keep the fast, considering our ways to learn whether

there are paths we follow which by their nature must infallibly lead us into evil. And for this consideration and this abstinence there is no better opportunity than in the withdrawals and considerings which should be won for us by the greater leisure which these Lenten days should bring.

Perhaps, being what we are and tied to small experiences and little forms of thought, it might be well for us to begin the application of reform in what may seem the very little places. For so, at least, we shall have made a real beginning, which may seem well within our present power and may eventually lead us on to larger things. For in our little lives, it is seldom the great and flagrant sins that tempt us. It is the little sins, the unkind words, the petty self-indulgences which make the trouble; until we are ready to cry out with the actor in the Canticles, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines." If we could fast from some very little self-indulgent, inconsiderate ways that spoil our witness, it might avail us more than many meals omitted and many searchings of the heart in more apparently portentous things.

We must not use our fastings merely as a whetting of the appetite for a return to self-indulgent feasts to come. You remember how Mohammed planned the days of fasting for his followers. The month of Ramadan was chosen—a single month in comparison with the forty days of the commemorative Christian fast of Lent. But the fast was only for the daylight hours. When the sun went down, the feast returned. While the sun was in the sky the abstinence was total. When the sun went down, the table might be spread. I think more highly of the traditional Christian fast that made for choice and moderation and did not drive the soul to craving expectations of possible excess. If our fasting does not bring us nearer God, but only makes us dream in hungry hours of following repletion, our self-denial loses worth. If fasting has no higher end in view, if it is a mere attempt at bribery of the higher powers, it is no more than unrewarding folly.

Rest from excitement, leisure to draw near to God, a fresh proportioning of life's duties and opportunities, a measureing look abroad to note the needs of others; these are some of the privileges of our commemorative days. In these days of unemployment and distress we may do well to remember words spoken in Jerusalem some twenty-five centuries ago: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry? and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? and when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy healing shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward." — *Saturday Night Thoughts, in Boston Transcript.*

THE EXAMPLE

Here's an example from
  A Butterfly;
That on a rough, hard rock
  Happy can lie;
Friendless and all alone
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,
  No care take I;
I'll make my joy like this
  Small Butterfly;
Whose happy heart has power
To make a stone a flower.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES.
From Modern British Poetry. Edited by Louis Untermeyer.

We talk about the telescope of faith, but I think we want even more the microscope of watchful and grateful love. Apply this to the little bits of our daily lives, in the light of the Spirit, and how wonderfully they come out! — *Frances Ridley Havergal.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

KEYS

ROSE BROOKS

Nancy Parker dragged her little steamer trunk out of her closet, where it had stood on end ever since it and she had arrived at Miss Walton's School, three months before.

"Are you as glad to go home as I am?" whispered Nancy, snapping back the two hasps. "Gracious, are you locked? Because if you are, goodness knows where your key is." Top bureau drawer? No. Little drawers in the desk? No.

Half an hour, and Nancy, having rummaged in every probable and impossible corner and cranny in her room, sat down on the unopened trunk in despair.

"Oh, well," she addressed her traveling companion, "you needn't be so grim about it. Lucky we don't start for another week. I just thought I'd drop in a few things here and there, as I came to them. I'll run down to the locksmith's now, while there's time."

Nancy slipped into her warm tweed coat and pulled a soft little brown hat over her auburn hair, which would twist into bright little curls like a baby's. Closing the door behind her, she hesitated in the hall.

"I suppose Peggy's key might fit, or Betty's, or someone's. No, I won't ask them one thing more than I have to." Nancy's brown eyes darkened unhappily, as she came to her decision, and, without further hesitation, she went quickly downstairs, out of the door, and started for the busy square two blocks away, where she had often noticed a tiny locksmith shop, its windows strewn with keys.

"I'm glad I didn't ask them," ran her thoughts, as she hurried along. "I can't ask them anything. And I thought it was going to be the happiest place in the world—that's what I thought school was going to be. The first day I thought it was heaven. All the girls were friendly, but, almost right away, everything was queer. And now school is the one place I want to get away from. I'm out of everything, and not a girl cares, really, whether I'm alive or dead."

With this extreme and gloomy idea reached, Nancy realized she was in front of the window of many keys. Turning the door knob, to enter, she was greeted by a jangling bell, in response to which a gentle-faced old man poked his head in a door at the back of the shop and called pleasantly:

"Just one minute and I'll be there."

The next minute a white-haired old man entered and gave her a smile of exactly the same quality as his voice.

"You look," said he, before Nancy had found her voice, "as if you were in trouble. Well, there's a key to every trouble; don't you know that?"

"You take a look in my window, if you don't believe me," said he, still smiling that magic smile which made Nancy feel at once both very small and very friended. "You can't think some one of those keys isn't going to work magic for you?"

"I can't open my trunk," Nancy managed to say. "I want to go home, and I've lost my key."

"Nobody in this world ever lost the key to going home," said the old locksmith. "That's the one key I never have to duplicate."

"Oh, I mean," said Nancy, who by this time felt she had left her real self far behind and was an entirely new person come suddenly to life in an enchanted land. "I mean—"

"We know what you mean," said the old man. "The keys and I know what everybody means. We haven't lived our lives for nothing. Now you're one of the young ladies at Miss Walton's School, aren't you?"

"I'm Nancy Parker. You don't know me, do you? I mean, how did you know?"

"One of my keys told me," said the old man. "I keep lots of them in the window, so they can get to know the passers-by. Then when anybody comes into the shop —well, you heard that loud bell, didn't you, when you opened the door?"

"Yes," said Nancy, sure that she was in the nicest world she had ever entered.

"That bell is good and loud, to drown out what the keys call to me. I hear them both—bell and keys. You heard only the bell, didn't you?"

Nancy had no reply for this, but her solemn little face suddenly lighted into a smile to match the locksmith's own.

"That's better," approved the locksmith. "Now we shall get on. Before we begin on business, I'm going to tell you a little story. 'Twon't take but a minute. 'Once upon a time a young lady, or a very little girl, I'm not sure which she was, left home for the first time in her life and traveled off to boarding school. She thought she was going to heaven, but the other young ladies, or very little girls, I'm not sure which they are, meant to be kind and friendly; but they soon forgot about her because she was so lonely and very shy. They're right nice young ladies, or very little girls—whichever you decide they are—only they're thoughtless and their pretty heads are chock-full of their own affairs. But there's a key to every one of 'em. But to go on with my story. So my young lady finds, when her first vacation time comes, that she's pretty homesick and she drags out her trunk a week ahead of time and she can't open it. She has lost the key. But my story has a very happy ending. Shall I send up and get your trunk, Miss Parker?"

"Why, yes," said Nancy, taken completely aback. "I mean, if you will, please."

The white-haired old locksmith opened his order book and took a pencil from his coat pocket. "'Miss Nancy Parker,' I think you said. I'll send up first thing after lunch."

"You said it had a very happy ending," she said faintly.

"It has," the locksmith assured her. "Shall I tell you what it is, or would you rather find out for yourself?"

"You said," Nancy hesitated. "You said there was a key to every one of them—the girls, I mean."

"I mean the girls, too. There is. Maybe you don't know as much about keys as I do, not being a locksmith."

"No." And this time Nancy laughed outright. "Maybe I don't."

"Then you let an old locksmith tell you one or two secrets of his trade. Now trunks are obstinate things. Each must have its own key, and no other will do. But humans, in comparison to trunks—they're easy as A B C. Carry three keys on your key ring, and you'll unlock 'em all. You don't believe me?"

"Yes," said Nancy as trustingly as a very little girl. "I believe everything you say, but I don't understand anything you mean."

"I never had so nice a compliment," said the gentle old locksmith. "Will you remember the three keys, if I tell you?"

"I'll remember," promised Nancy.

"Will you use them, really use them, even if you find some locks a little rusty?"

"I'll use them," promised Nancy.

"The first key," said the locksmith, counting it off on his first finger, "is the most important. It's 'forget-yourself' key."

"The second key," said the old locksmith, counting it off on his middle finger, is 'do-the-other-person-a-kindness.'"

"Oh!" said Nancy, light beginning to dawn.

"The third key," said the old locksmith, unbending his fourth finger, is 'find-out-what-interests-the - other - person - most.' You see the last two keys depend entirely on the first key."

"Oh!" said Nancy again, and, without another word, she smiled at the gentle old locksmith and turned and walked out of his door, leaving the bell jangling behind her.

Five days later, Nancy again opened the old locksmith's door, and again, above the bell's jangling, a pleasant voice called:

"Just a minute and I'll be there. Just one minute."

"It's me! It's Nancy Parker!"

"You've got a brand new voice!" said the old locksmith, hurrying in. "Wasn't your trunk key satisfactory, Miss Par-

ker?" Nancy thought the old locksmith's smile was even more magic than she remembered it.

"Trunk key?" she said. "Oh, that! They worked! Your three keys worked!"

"They always work. Don't you lose them!"

"No," said Nancy, in the same happy voice, "and I told Miss Walton, 'cause she asked me why everything was suddenly so different, and she said you were one of her best friends, too. She said you were a philosopher. Are you? Just what is one, anyway? I thought you were a locksmith."

"I like the 'too,'" said the old locksmith. "Philosopher? Anybody can be one of those. I like being a locksmith better."

"So do I," said Nancy. "Lots better. And I'm going home tomorrow, and 'course I want to go home, 'cause you do want awfully to see your mother and father—"

"I knew that home key couldn't get lost—not by anyone," interrupted the old locksmith.

"But I want awfully to come back to school. It's just the way I always thought it was going to be, now, and the girls are so nice and jolly and I'm in everything. They didn't mean to leave me out—they say they thought *I* didn't like *them!*" In a sudden burst of mischief, she added:

"What did the keys in the window call to you, when I jangled the bell this time?"

"Can't you hear them for yourself, yet?" asked the old locksmith in mock surprise. "Why, they all sang out together, plain as day, 'Didn't we tell you she'd make that key story you told her come true?'" —*Christian Register.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

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